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PERSONS AGAINST RITUAL ABUSE-TORTURE

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The Honourable Jean Augustine

Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Status of Women)

Status of Women Canada

MacDonald Building

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Letter sent by e-mail May 28, 2004: augustinej@swc-cfc.gc.ca

Dear Honourable Minister Jean Augustine;

We will be as brief as possible in this letter as we expect that you and your department will contact us for further consultation.

Each year, June 26 is recognized by the United Nations and memorialized around the world by human rights activists as the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. However, in Canada, and elsewhere, there are girl and boy infants, toddlers, children, youth, and captive enslaved women who are struggling to survive a horrific form of organized family/group violence identifiable as ritual abuse-torture.

Ritual abuse-torture is an emerging human rights violation and identified as a newly acknowledged form of torture that is inflicted by “non-state actors” unto the girl and boy infant, toddler, child, youth and the captive enslaved woman.

RITUAL ABUSE-TORTURE: FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND UNDERSTANDING:

Ten thematic issues describe the organized crime of ritual abuse-torture that inter-generational families and like-minded groups perpetrate unto girl and boy infants, toddlers, children, youth, and captive enslaved women. Our work and research has been with women who spoke of their personal victimization and traumatization. They also spoke of the horror of witnessing the ritual abuse-torture victimization of other girl and boy children of all ages from infants to youth. We do not know of research about the ritual abuse-torture of men, however, one man has submitted his statement (victim statements are addressed later in this letter) about his ritual abuse-torture victimization

in childhood. His presence and victimization as a person will be acknowledged in this letter. This is in keeping with the United Nations and the Commission on the Status of Women's efforts of engaging boys and men in addressing all issues that continue to contribute to on-going relational violence.

The ten defining thematic issues of ritual abuse-torture victimization are:

1. "In-house" and "on-site" **organized child abuse** by families/groups
2. Family/group **terrorization** to keep victims silenced and enslaved
3. Family/group **cruelty to animals** including bestiality
4. Family/group acts of physical, sexualized, and mind-spirit **torture**
5. Family/group **pedophilia** that can and does begin with infants
6. Family/group pleasures related to **necrophilism and pedophilic necrophilic acts** such as inducing "death-like" immobility in the infant to youth or adult victim by suffocating into unconsciousness or over-drugging (date rape drugging is a common present day comparable analogy)
7. Family/group **violent ritualisms** that function as **group bonding** mechanisms, i.e. normalizes family/group raping of a toddler
8. Family/group actions that inflict **horrification** unto victims
9. Family/group acts that **council and enforce suicidal and other Self-harming acts** unto their victims for the purpose of ensuring victims remain silent
10. Family/group enslavement and forced involvement of their victims in the **pedophilic and adult pornographic and sexualized exploitation and trafficking trade** which can be local or transnational, as well as, forcing victims to commit other criminal acts such as forced participation in the illegal drug trade.

THE TORTURERS: 'STATE ACTORS' AND 'NON-STATE ACTORS'

There is little that separates the human evil actions of one torturer from another, as the acts of torture they inflict result in consequences that were/are intentionally meant to be destructive to the humanness of the chosen victim.¹ For a reality insight we provide the following two examples:

Sister Ortiz: Tortured by 'state actors'

Burned nearly 100 times with cigarettes; terrified; gang-raped; dogs used; horror; blood; suspended over a pit of the bodies of persons who had been murdered and persons who were still dying; a knife forced into her hands and held there by her torturers as they plunged it into another woman and this horror videotaped for blackmailing purposes; hearing the torturer's "if you tell no one will believe you," statement; their laughter; humiliation—these are some of the over-whelming ordeals Sister Diana Ortiz reports were inflicted unto her during her 24-hour state of captivity by the Guatemalan army's counterinsurgency force, on November 2, 1989. Escaping back to the United

¹ Staub, E. (1989). *The Roots of Evil* (p. 25). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

States Sister Ortiz uncovers crucial information that convinces her of links between her torturers and the Guatemalan and U.S. governments.²

Sara: Tortured by ‘non-state actors’ ... ritual abuse-torturers

Burned with cigarettes, candles, hot light bulbs for more times than can be recorded; terrified; family/group and individually raped; suspended by her limbs; bestiality; horror; blood; forced involvement in real and/or sham murder rituals; a knife forced into her hands and held there by her torturers as they plunged it into another human being; horrified; horrors videotaped as trophies for future pleasures, for commercial trade on the pornography market, and for emotional blackmailing purposes; hearing the torturer’s statement “if you live to tell no one will believe you,”; their laughter; humiliation—these are just a few of the overwhelming ordeals Sara describes experiencing during her 35-years of enslaved captivity and ritual abuse-torture by “the family”. A co-culture of trans-generational kin and/or non-kin whose like-minded needs and desires for ritual abuse-torture (RAT) can be inter-connected regionally, nationally, internationally, and transnationally with other like-minded families/groups.³

CANADA’S KNOWLEDGE AND INACTION: THE CANADIAN PANEL ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Canada has known about the human rights violations and the acts of torture inflicted by ritual abuse-torture families/groups since 1993. That year, the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, whose membership was appointed, in 1991, by, the then, Honourable Mary Collins, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, released their report, *Changing the Landscape: Ending Violence ~ Achieving Equality*. Women from **every region** of Canada told the panel that they had been ritually abused, tortured, and trafficked in childhood. As adults some expressed fearing for their lives for talking to the panel. The panel identified ritual abuse [-torture] as a crime that needed immediate attention in Canada (pp. 45-47).

Secondly, the panel reported being informed by persons who had survived that they found it extremely difficult to find useful therapeutic help; many told of enduring painful and unhelpful therapy and medical treatment.

Thirdly, the Panel stated survivors do not enjoy equal benefit and protection of the law and without recognition for the crime of ritual abuse-torture inflicted unto them any notion of a just or equitable society is impossible.

Fourthly, effective helpers have been targets of organized efforts to discount their work, to attack their support of victimized persons, have faced impossible conditions of

² Murphy, B. (2002). Nun’s piercing memoir and her quest for the truth. *The Times*; Ortiz, D. , & Davis, P. (2002). *The Blindfold’s eyes My journey from torture to truth*. New York: Orbis Books.

³ Sara (pseudonym) is working to share her “story” in our book, *The torturers walk among us*, a work in progress.

practice, lack of support, suffer burnout, and frequently are forced to withdraw their services.

Therefore;

Canada, by its failure to take reasonable steps to respond or prevent or to act to provide effective intervention remedies based on the knowledge gained from the Canadian Panel, with its mandate of focussing on violence against women, has failed to be responsible in its due diligence to act with political will and with sufficient effort to respect, protect, and fulfil its human rights and legal obligations to/for the girl and boy infant, toddler, child, youth, and captive enslaved woman who are victims of ritual abuse-torture by “non-state actors”—the ritual abuse-torture families/groups.

THE RESULTS HAVE BEEN, ARE, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE:

1. On-Going Human Rights Violations and Acts of Impunity;

Canada has, for over eleven years, ignored the human rights violations and torture inflicted unto the girl and boy infant, toddler, child, and youth by “non-state actors”—the perpetrators of ritual abuse-torture. Canada has ignored its responsibilities and its accountabilities relating to the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and its attached Protocol. Thus, Canada has impaired or nullified the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the victimized child.

And;

Canada has, for over eleven years, ignored the standard of due diligence that has been explicitly incorporated into United Nations human rights standards. For example, in the *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women* it states that states are to ‘exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and, in accordance with national legislation, punish acts of violence against women, whether those acts are perpetrated by the state or by private persons’ (*Respect, protect, fulfil Women’s human rights State responsibility for abuses by ‘non-state actors’*. Amnesty International UK, 2000, June, 7)

And;

Since 1993 persons with positional power and with governmental authority have chosen to ignore the Canadian and trans-national crime of ritual abuse-torture committed on the girl and boy infant, toddler, child, youth, and captive enslaved woman. They have permitted the “non-state actors”—the torturers of ritual abuse-torture—to act with impunity.

2. On-going Human Trafficking of the Girl and Boy Child and Woman;

Canada has ignored holding responsible the specific population of “non-state actors”—the family/group ritual abuse-torturers—who are contributing to the national and global crime of human trafficking and modern day slavery. These specific family/group perpetrators are trafficking under the radar of preventing, combating, and prosecuting interventions because of the myths civil society holds about the image of the trafficker—the “gangster image” trafficker versus “the parental/caretaker image” of the trafficker. Such false perceptions are the same kind of “stranger” myths that have made children vulnerable to the family, friend, or neighbour pedophile. It is generally considered that 80% of perpetrators who inflict violence against a child are known to the child ... for the infant, toddler, child, or youth of ritual abuse-torture families/groups the reality is they are born into pedophilic families or their prime caregiver on whom they are dependant is the organizer of horrific ritual abuse-torture ordeals of family/group victimization and traumatization. Canada and civil society need reality education if they are to understand the modus operandi of the trafficking actions of the ritual abuse-torture family/group.

Therefore;

Canada has also chosen to ignore the fact that the ritual abuse-torture family/group “rent out” and engage in the “off-street” human trafficking and modern day slavery of the girl and boy infant, toddler, child, youth, or the captive enslaved woman. Thus, the failure to act is in violation of the *United Nations 2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime*.

3. On-Going Acts of Torturing of the Girl and Boy and Woman;

Canada has also chosen to ignore that ritual abuse-torture involves acts of torture by “non-state actors”.

Therefore;

Canada is also in violation of many other UN declarations, conventions, and protocols relating to the elimination of torture and violence against the girl and boy infant, toddler, child, youth, and captive enslaved woman. On December 10, 1984, the then, Secretary-General of the United Nations, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, noted, when the *Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* was adopted by consensus that “... one of the most insidious evils in this supposedly modern age is the continued practice of inflicting torture upon individual human beings.” The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Article 5, states, “no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.” *The Rome Statute* establishes an international legal order to bring to justice those who commit the most heinous crimes—crimes against humanity. “Non-state actors” who commit ritual abuse-torture do inflict heinous evil acts of torture against the humanity of the girl and boy infant, toddler, child, youth, and the captive enslaved adult woman.

IT CAN BE STATED THAT:

Canada has not taken responsibility or respected, protected, or fulfilled or upheld its human rights obligations to the victimized girl and boy child or woman or practiced the standard of due diligence or devised a system to hold the ‘non-state actor’—the perpetrator of ritual abuse-torture—accountable.

Since;

We have become knowledgeable about the heinous crime of ritual abuse-torture we have, as Canadian citizens, been advocating that the human right violations and torture of the girl and boy infant, toddler, child, youth, and captive enslaved woman be recognized.

For the past eleven years, we have dedicated most of our personal and professional volunteer efforts into helping and researching the reality of ritual abuse-torture victimization and traumatization. Our most recent efforts involved presenting our 11 years of work and research on ritual abuse-torture as members on a panel entitled, “The Many Faces of Torture”. Dana Raphael, PhD, Director, of The Human Lactation Center, with non-governmental organization (NGO) consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, facilitated the side panel presentation at the 48th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), March 1-12, 2004, at UN Headquarters in New York City. Dr. Raphael spoke with you about ritual abuse-torture and our Canadian research. The outcome of the panel presentation and the collaborative discussions with many at the CSW Session led to the following recommendation statement:

Ritual abuse-torture is identified as an emerging human rights violation and a newly acknowledged form of torture that is inflicted by “non-state actors” unto the girl and boy infant, toddler, child, youth, and captive enslaved woman.

Since 1993, we have been witnesses listening to the horrific and brutal ordeals described by persons who struggle to go beyond their terrorization, torture, and horrification ordeals of ritual abuse-torture. And, when victimized persons—women and one man—became aware we were presenting at the NGO CSW Session we heard, not only from Canadians, but from 61 victimized persons in Costa Rica, England, Germany, Scotland, and the United States. They sent over 400 artifactual testimonials that described, with repetitive similarities, the brutal and horrific ordeals the ritual abuse-torture families/groups had perpetrated against them. Their artifactual testimonials were part of the side panel presentation.

In addition, Ms. Jeanette Westbrook, MSSW, CSW, a citizen of the United States, spoke as a panellist and as a survivor of being born into a ritual abuse-torture family and of her father, as her prime torturer—a “non-state actor”. Ms Westbrook also spoke of her adulthood victimization stating she was in her twenties before she was able to exit her ordeals of on-going ritual abuse-torture victimization. Her statement is included as representative of her courage to speak and to contribute to civil society’s need to develop awareness about ritual abuse-torture.

WOMEN’S STATEMENTS AND ONE MAN’S STATEMENT: THEIR VOICES ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GIRL CHILD AND THE BOY CHILD;

We bring to your attention that attached to this letter, as evidence, are testimonial statements. These statements are:

1. Ms. Westbrook’s testimonial, as just mentioned in the previous paragraph.
2. Canadian women’s testimonials, arranged in alphabetical order, who survived ritual abuse-torture, and their evidence that as Canadian women they are speaking out demanding to be heard; identifying that their fundamental human rights, their dignity, and their worth as human persons be respected (*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948).
3. In addition, we have attached brief statements from non-Canadian women, who, as children or youth, were trafficked into Canada—that is, Canada was a destination country for the ritual abuse-torture family/group traffickers. Canada, in the year 2004, continues to remain a destination country and this speaks to the reality of the Canadian demand and contribution to the multi-million dollar global organized crimes of sexualized exploitation and the trafficking of human persons—particularly of the girl and the boy infant, toddler, child, and youth, and of the captive enslaved woman.
4. The testimonial of one man who was born in Canada but lived most of his childhood in the US, who reports trans-border ritual abuse-torture victimization.
5. A one-page signed petition, a result of an information session we gave on May 26, 2004 to a small group who attended a St. John’s Anglican Church Pastoral Ministry Committee sponsored presentation.

The statements provided by the women and the man are also representative of the voices of children—girls and boys who, today, are struggling to stay alive ... struggling to survive the terror, abuse, torture, and horror inflicted unto them by “non-state actors” involved in ritual abuse-torture families/groups ... and, who are struggling to survive the horrors of their trafficking victimization.

The testimonials also bring to your attention the reality that Canadian women who have survived ritual abuse-torture are presently being or were denied their fundamental rights to seek truthful justice as Canada’s judicial system is not/was not prepared to assist them name and bring their ordeals of ritual abuse-torture to the courts in a manner that

affords them equal benefit and protection of the law; a problem identified in the Canadian Panel's Final Report.

Therefore;

WE REQUEST CANADA INITIATE ACCOUNTABLE INTERVENTIONS:

(a) Globally, Canada as a member of the United Nations, must:

Support victimized children and women's (and men's) human rights by recognizing, then educating appropriate United Nations committees, for example, the Committee on the Rights of the Child that meets in Geneva in June and October of this year, the UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, and to the Special Rapporteurs, that *ritual abuse-torture must be identified as an emerging human rights violation and a newly acknowledged form of torture that is inflicted by "non-state actors" against the girl and boy infant, toddler, child, youth, and captive enslaved woman.*

(b) Nationally, Canada must:

1. Recognize there are no laws in Canada that facilitate the victimized Canadian child's, woman's (and man's) ability to seek justice by having the crime of ritual abuse-torture committed against them truthfully named in a court of law. Canadian laws need to be enacted that name ritual abuse-torture as a specific crime. The Canadian Criminal Code, Section 269.1., presently only addresses acts of torture perpetrated by "state actors". Amendments are necessary so that torture inflicted by "non-state-actors" becomes a criminal offence, thus, putting an end to the impunity presently afforded ritual abuse-torturers. Naming the crime of ritual abuse-torture will also facilitate informed Canadian police forces who will be better able to respond to the protective needs of the woman (or man) victimized by "non-state actors" of ritual abuse-torture.
2. Acknowledge the crime of ritual abuse-torture so inappropriate and harmful intervention services can be redirected into appropriately focussed recovery and wellness services specifically attentive to the needs of the girl or boy infant, toddler, child, youth, or the captive enslaved woman (or man) who has been, or who is being, or who is at risk of being victimized by perpetrators of ritual abuse-torture. Services that do not re-victimize; services that do not negatively label the victimized girl or boy child or the captive enslaved woman; services that do not negate the woman (or man) who suffered childhood victimization; services comparable to those offered to person's who have had their human rights violated and who have survived torture by "state actors".
3. Help us and women (and men) who have been victimized gain consultation access to the governmental departments with responsibilities and accountabilities to use their positional powers to establish preventing, combating, and prosecuting interventions that ensure the evolution of a just and equitable society respectful of the victimized woman's (or man's) fundamental rights and freedoms.

(c) Canada in relationship with its civil society citizens must:

Help us and women (and men) who have been victimized gain access to the appropriate United Nations Committees that deal with Human Rights, violence against women, the Committee Against Torture, and the committees that work for the elimination of trafficking in persons, especially women and the girl and the boy child so that victimization and healing information and research data about the crime of ritual abuse-torture can be shared. So interventions aimed at preventing ritual abuse-torture and combating, and prosecuting the “non-state actors”—the ritual abuse-torturers—can begin.

We are expecting that you, as our representative in Canadian society and at the United Nations, promote best practices by taking action now. We expect your timely reply as to the consultative support you require, as to the interventions you initiate, and the support you can offer to us and to the children and women (and men) who have endured not only ritual abuse-torture victimization and traumatization but who have been marginalized, oppressed, and ignored by Canadian civil society including our government.

Respectfully submitted,

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cc. The Honourable Irwin Cotler
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Cc'ed to other individuals, groups, organizations whose work is to attend to the responsibility of creating a just Canada, to work for human rights, to eliminate torture and all forms of violence including human trafficking with attention given to the girl and the boy child and women, and whose work is for peace in our global community.

Appendices: Postscript: Appendices are withheld for confidentiality reasons